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# Families invited to tell their stories in an essay for possible 'hardship grant'

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November 17, 2014 8:30 am • By Pat Schneider

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The Boys and Girls Club of Dane County is inviting local

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Michael Johnson

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## Pat Schneider



Pat Schneider

Pat Schneider joined The Capital Times in 1989 and has written on a wide variety of topics including neighborhoods, minority communities and the nonprofit sector.



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families to tell their stories of hardship and be considered for grants of up to \$3,000 for a specific need.

The Family Hardship Grants will be paid by a family foundation whose members want to remain anonymous, said Michael Johnson, CEO of the **Boys and Girls Club of Dane County**.

Essays of up to 2,000 words can be written by any member of a family living in Dane County and should be focused on how getting money for a specific unmet need will benefit children in the household, according to a **Friday Facebook post by Johnson**.

The entries must submitted by email by 5 p.m. on Nov. 24 to Sigal Lazimy at [slazimy@bgcdc.org](mailto:slazimy@bgcdc.org). A committee of community volunteers will decide the week of Dec. 15 who will be awarded grants.

Resources might be sought for a variety of unmet needs: rent, utilities, mortgage, doctor bills, prescription drugs, equipment, food, clothing, day care, housekeeping supplies.

"Anything creating a hardship," Johnson said in an interview.

The grant will go directly towards the unpaid bill, not to the family, he said.

This effort is the first he has heard of where a family grant will be paid on the basis of an essay, Johnson said.

He said he was contacted by a representative of the private foundation while in Washington, D.C., this week, where he



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met with local congressional and Department of Education representatives, among others.

The foundation is not setting a limit on the number of grants it will make, Johnson said.

“It will depend on how compelling a case they make,” he said.

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**Tags** Pat Schneider, Michael Johnson, Boys And Girls Club Of Dane County, Hardship Grant, Essay

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